

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 354

By Person

A RESOLUTION to congratulate the Honorable John C. Lyell, II,
Esquire on the celebration of his 50th birthday.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this Body should pause to recognize a most significant milestone in the life of Tennessee's most beloved, most notorious and most obnoxious lobbyist, John C. Lyell, II, Esquire; and

WHEREAS, as Mr. Lyell attains the plateau of fifty (yes, only 50!) years of age, we should commiserate with this lobbyist's lobbyist as he regretfully witnesses the graying, and in some instances, the disappearance of his hair; and

WHEREAS, as he listens to his arteries harden, which will probably be the greatest amount of excitement he will experience on his birthday, John Lyell can fondly reminisce on his nefarious and sometimes clandestine career on Capitol Hill and beyond; and

WHEREAS, John has become infamous for his misogynistic comments and jokes so ribald they would make Larry Flynt blush; as a consequence of this notoriety, he is often mistaken for a member of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, in fact, his exploits as the Big Dog of Tennessee Lobbyists have earned him the exalted title of "The 34th Senator"; and

WHEREAS, because of his extensive knowledge and expertise in THE LAW and parliamentary procedure and his peerless proficiency at banging a gavel very loudly, Mr. Lyell was conscripted by Lieutenant Governor Wilder to preside over the Senate during the last day of the 1993 session; and

56022198

56022198

008825

00882516

WHEREAS, “widely” known for his passion for “sporteating,” John never misses the opportunity to wine and dine Senator Person, as long as Senator Person is buying, and thus he grows wider each passing day; and

WHEREAS, consistently cited as one of the top lobbyists in Tennessee, he was elected to the dubious honor of board member and chairman of the Tennessee Lobbyists Association in 1996; and

WHEREAS, perhaps Mr. Lyell’s greatest claim to immortality is his most effective representation of the Houston Oilers before the General Assembly, for which exemplary efforts he received the most prestigious Order of the Oil Derrick from Bud Adams and the undying gratitude of the relieved citizens of Houston, Texas; and

WHEREAS, renowned among his peers and colleagues as a giver of thoughtful gifts, Mr. Lyell once presented a friend’s six-year-old boy with a complete drum set on his birthday; thankfully, the Lobbyists Gift Act will act as a deterrent to any such future acts of generosity; and

WHEREAS, during his fun-loving, yet studious, days as an undergraduate at the University of Tennessee, Mr. Lyell was fond of visiting Tuckaleechee Caverns to delve into the various pristine delights of nature found there; and

WHEREAS, unfortunately, during one memorable evening at the Caverns, the unscheduled departure of a bus caused Mr. Lyell to prematurely interrupt an especially uplifting natural experience; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lyell’s unforgettable performance on that fateful evening truly gave new and emphatic meaning to the haunting melody of “Moonlight Sonata”; and

WHEREAS, the same assertiveness and pugnacity that have earned Mr. Lyell success as a member of the Third House were an integral part of his sparkling personality even during his salad days; and

WHEREAS, once at a fine West Knoxville dining establishment, Mr. Lyell's aggressive, one might even say, rude behavior incurred the wrath of a fellow female customer who became extremely irate at his discourtesy and advised him as to exactly where he could place his serving utensils; and

WHEREAS, as they happened to depart the eatery at the same time, this ill-tempered shrew was surprised to behold a full moon, crater and all, rising in the middle of the day; and

WHEREAS, on both these occasions, Mr. Lyell distinguished himself as an accomplished amateur astronomer, who was learned in all phases of the moon, but especially the full moon; and

WHEREAS, over one score and one year ago, John Lyell embarked upon an epic voyage on the sometimes turbulent, sometimes peaceful waters of marital bliss with his loving wife, Marilyn; and

WHEREAS, before the ink was dry on their marriage license, Mr. Lyell was already displaying the same thoughtfulness, empathy and keen attention to detail that have won him a legion of enemies on Capitol Hill; and

WHEREAS, carefully following the time-honored dictates of Emily Post relative to good manners in a polite society, Marilyn meticulously drafted a thank-you note for each gift the Lyells had received in celebration of their nuptial event; and

WHEREAS, after painstakingly completing this considerable task, she entrusted the thank-you notes to her new hubby for deposit at the local post office; and

WHEREAS, John placed the Miss Manners mail in his car, gave his trusting bride that winning smile that we have all come to know and distrust, and promptly forgot all about his appointed duty; and

WHEREAS, some six months later, a sudden rainstorm and a leaking car trunk conspired to reduce Marilyn's eloquently crafted missives to mush; and

WHEREAS, evidencing the compassion and humanity that have caused his peers to speculate about the anatomical impossibility of a human being, even John, living without a heart, Mr. Lyell promptly discarded his dear wife's earnest epistles in the nearest trash receptacle, and seemingly relegated his marriage to the scrap heap at the same time; and

WHEREAS, as a point in his favor, John at least had the good sense not to mention this slight faux pas to his good wife, thereby lending credence to the commonly held belief that whatever his shortcomings may be, John Lyell is no fool; and

WHEREAS, for over twenty years, this unfortunate accident has remained a deep, dark secret that John has carried with guilt, but little remorse, against his breast, ever apprehensive of its imminent discovery; and

WHEREAS, that is, this regrettable incident has been a well-kept secret from Marilyn Lyell until today, but now she suddenly realizes why her entire family hasn't spoken to her in over twenty years, having previously assumed, of course, that her marriage to John was sufficient reason; and

WHEREAS, perhaps a few of his true blue friends, especially the appropriately named Weasel, can desist from their defamation (or is it definition?), of John's character for a few moments to assist him in relocating to his new permanent address, the doghouse; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lyell would indeed be *persona non grata* with the Mrs., except for the fact that no one is positive she actually exists: the loyal and true Marilyn has not accompanied John in public for nearly twenty years; and

WHEREAS, while we understand Marilyn's reluctance to appear in public with her husband, and even applaud her decision not to do so, her perpetual absence from his professional life has caused some insiders to speculate that she is modeling a concrete overcoat while pushing up daisies at the Lyell homestead in the company of the rest of John's former enemies; and

WHEREAS, all jocularly aside, John is most fortunate to have the wonderful Marilyn as his lifelong partner and friend, and he is greatly appreciative of the love, companionship and stalwart support he receives from his excellent wife; and

WHEREAS, his very few foibles aside, John is an excellent role model for his sons, John, III and Chris; Dad is extremely proud of these two fine young men and their many accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, the age of 50 truly marks the beginning of the autumn of one's years, that degenerative time of life when one's eyesight falters, when one's bones creak, when rising to one's feet from a sitting position occasions numerous grunts and an undue amount of effort, and when one's memory tries mightily to fulfill its functions, but only produces a feeble flicker of recognition as synapses fail miserably in their attempt to connect and provide that elusive date, telephone number or wife's name; and

WHEREAS, we can only wish our friend John Lyell all the best of these aforementioned delights of turning 50 as he enters his sixth decade secure in his enviable position as "the comforter to the comfortable"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we commiserate with our deep-pocketed friend and benefactor, the Honorable John C. Lyell, II, Esquire, on the celebration of his 50th birthday and join with him in mourning the passing of his youth, but not his infantile behavior, ten years after his youth has already passed to the Netherworld of broken dreams and unfulfilled aspirations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we direct Mr. Lyell to hereafter observe the highest precepts of Senatorial courtesy and make himself and his counsel available to Lieutenant Governor Wilder at all times, or at least provide Governor Wilder with his home and cellular telephone numbers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.